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DEAD MAN'S HAND part IX
THE PUNISHER war journal
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ROUGHER

WHEN MOBSTERS SLEW HIS FAMILY, FRANK CASTLE VOWED TO SPEND THE REST OF HIS LIFE AVENGING THEM! TRAINED AS A MARINE, AND EQUIPPED WITH A STATE-OF-THE-ART ARSENAL, HE NOW WAGES A ONE-MAN WAR ON CRIME! STAN LEE PRESENTS . . .

THE PUNISHER war journal

Say Goodbye To Vegas

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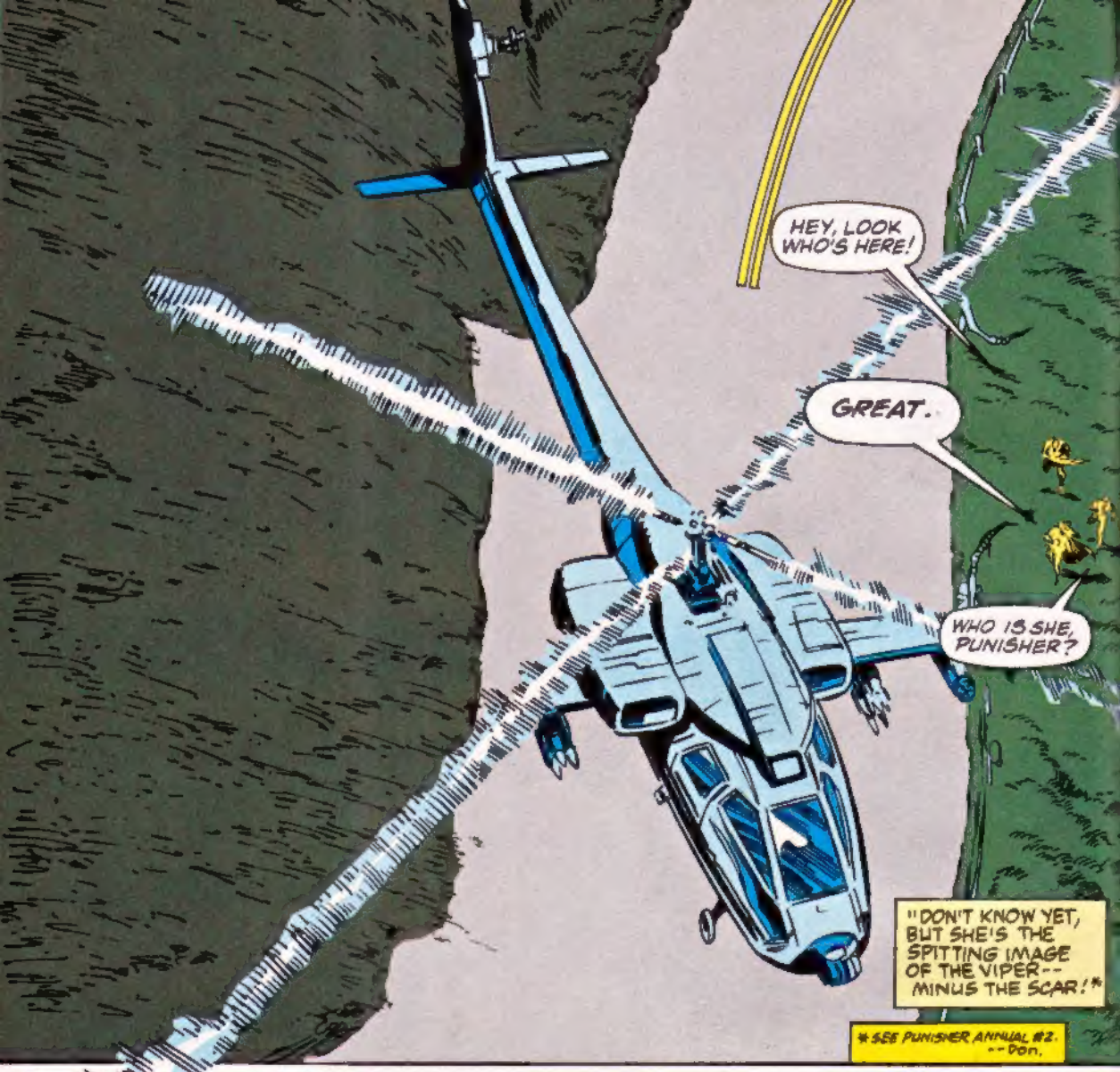
WHO'S "WE"?
DAREDEVIL'S HERE. WE'VE BURIED OUR DIFFERENCES.
FOR NOW.
AND SOME WACKO NAMED NOMAD. THIS GUY'S A MESS.
I SHOULDA KILLED HIM.
I WOULD'VE KILLED SLUG.
BUT YOU RAN OUT OF BULLETS.
I SHOULD BE MORE LIKE YOU, PUNISHER. MORE DECISIVE. MORE...
MORE HOMICIDAL?
YOU DON'T FIGHT CRIMINALS BY BECOMING ONE OF THEM, NOMAD. THIS GUY'S A ROTTEN ROLE MODEL.
I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
I DO IT MY WAY ...YOU DO IT YOURS.
HEADS UP!
SOMETHING COMING OUR WAY!

HOLD ON!
KILL OR BE KILLED, MAN!
HOLD YOUR FIRE!


HEY, LOOK WHO'S HERE!
GREAT.
WHO IS SHE, PUNISHER?
"DON'T KNOW YET, BUT SHE'S THE SPITTING IMAGE OF THE VIPER-- MINUS THE SCAR!*
* SEE PUNISHER ANNUAL #2. --Don.

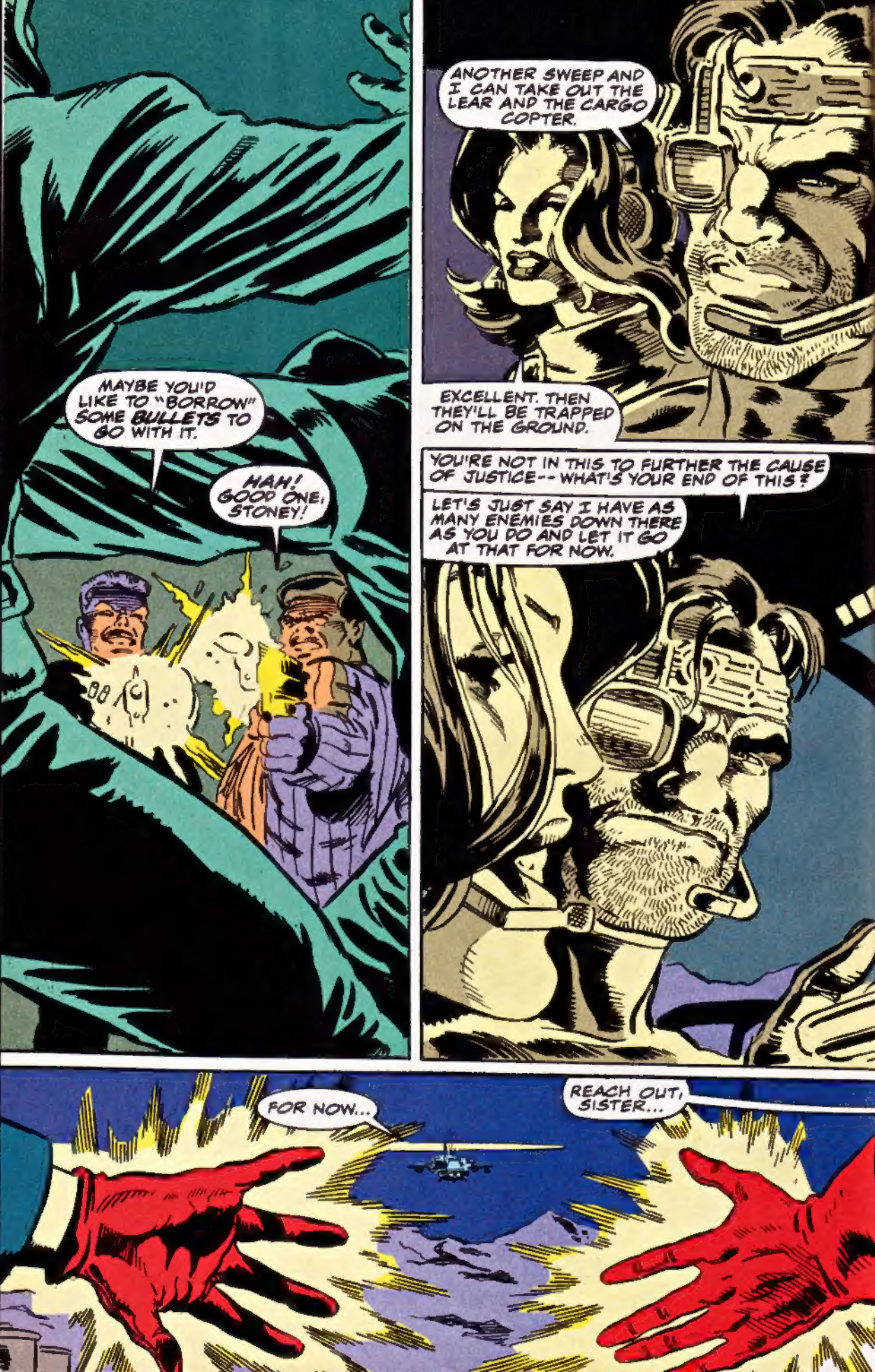
SHE COULD HAVE BLOWN US AWAY, TOO--A DOZEN TIMES BY NOW.
YOU OPENED FIRE, NOMAD. SHE ACTED IN SELF-DEFENSE.
YEAH--MAYBE--BUT THE FACT WE'RE STILL ALIVE DOESN'T MAKE WHOEVER SAVED US OUR ALLY.

IF YOU WANT TO CATCH UP WITH THE VERMIN FLEEING THE STATE YOU'D BETTER GET ON BOARD.
THERE ARE TARGETS WAITING.

THE RATS WILL NOT BE GOING OUT ON CONVENTIONAL FLIGHTS.
WE'LL FIND THEM TAKING THEIR OWN AIRCRAFT OFF OF SMALLER PRIVATE FIELDS.
AWESOME CHOPPER, LADY. HOW MUCH THIS SET YOU BACK?
IT WAS A GIFT.
SO HOW LONG YOU AND PUNISHER KNOWN EACH OTHER?
SHUT UP.
AS I TOLD YOU. THE RATS ARE HERE AND MAKING THEIR GETAWAY.
LOOK, LADY, I DON'T LIKE BEING A PASSENGER HERE. SLOW DOWN ENOUGH TO LET ME AND DARE-DEVIL OUT.
AS YOU WISH, PUNISHER?
I'M STAYING, FOR NOW.

GOOD.
THE BASKET CASE AND HOLY JOE ARE OUT OF THE WAY.
YOU EVER OPERATE A SIGHT-ACTIVATED CANNON?
IS THIS ANYTHING LIKE THE AH-64'S T.A.D.S. SYSTEM?
VERY SIMILAR.
NO PROBLEM.
THAT LEAVES MYSTERY DATE AND ME A CLEAR KILL ZONE.
AND NO WHINERS ON BOARD.
VRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

THERE'S SOME INCENDIARY ROUNDS LOADED IN THE 30MM.
GIVES US SOME LIGHT TO WORK BY.
I ACCEPT A RIDE IN YOUR CRUMMY JET AND YOU NEARLY GET ME KILLED, HAMMERHEAD.
WE CAN STILL GET OUT OF HERE IN MY LIMO, FREAK.
WHO YOU CALLIN' A FREAK, FLATHEAD?
YOU TAKE THAT BACK, TOMBSTONE.
WE'VE BEEN RATHER INCONVENIENCED IN OUR TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS. WE'D LIKE TO "BORROW" YOUR LIMOUSINE.
YEAH...?
MAKE ME.
I OUGHTA...


MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO "BORROW" SOME BULLETS TO GO WITH IT.
HAH! GOOD ONE, STONEY!
ANOTHER SWEEP AND I CAN TAKE OUT THE LEAR AND THE CARGO COPTER.
EXCELLENT. THEN THEY'LL BE TRAPPED ON THE GROUND.
YOU'RE NOT IN THIS TO FURTHER THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE-- WHAT'S YOUR END OF THIS?
LET'S JUST SAY I HAVE AS MANY ENEMIES DOWN THERE AS YOU DO AND LET IT GO AT THAT FOR NOW.
FOR NOW...
REACH OUT, SISTER...

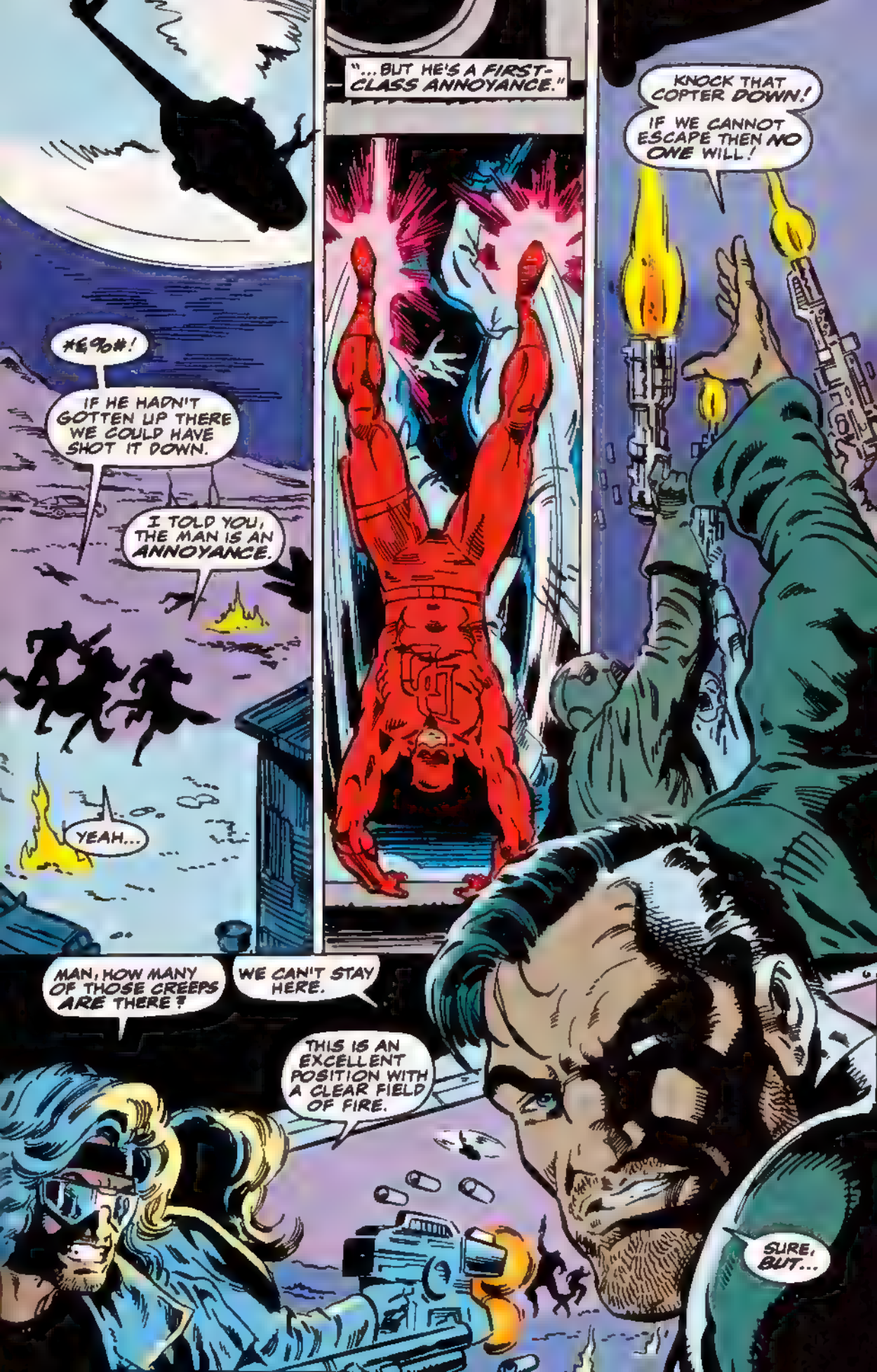
...AND TOGETHER FENRIS WILL DESTROY THESE DOGS.
ANDREAS, THE COPTER IS OF HYDRA DESIGN.
EVEN BETTER, ANDREA...
...EVEN MORE SATISFYING IN THE FACE OF OUR FATHER'S BETRAYAL.
SHALL WE SEE IF THERE WERE ANY SURVIVORS?
CERTAINLY, DEAR SISTER.
YOU'RE LOSING IT! SHE'S AUGERING!
I KNOW!

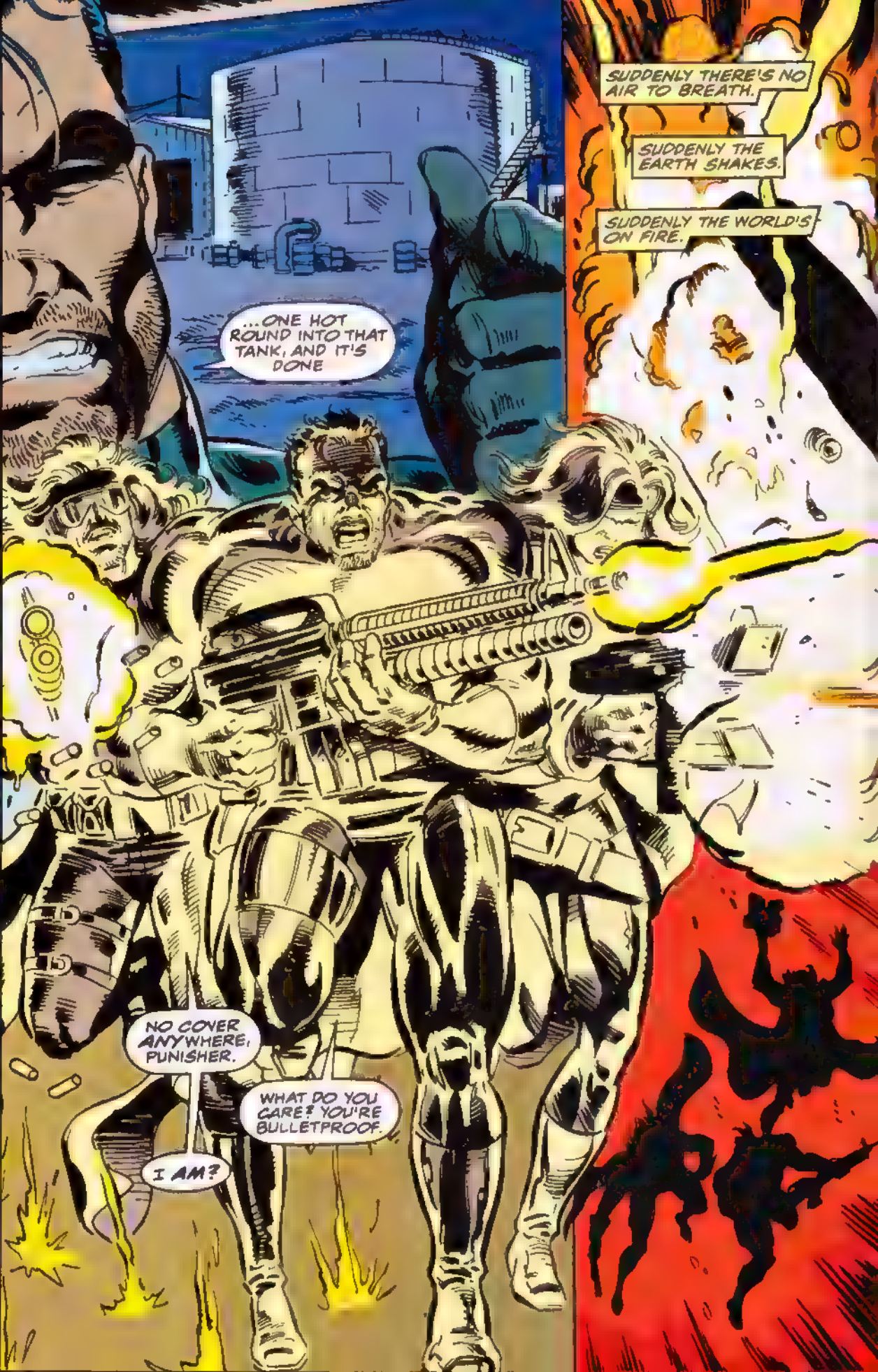
OOOOH!
UNNH!
I FIGURED IT OUT. YOU TWO ARE LIKE DONNY AND MARIE.
TOGETHER YOU'RE HOT, BUT SOLO YOU'RE--
STOP! YOU'LL HURT HIM!
REALLY?
THEN I WAS RIGHT. YOU TWO ARE NOTHING WITHOUT THE OTHER.
OOF!
YAAHAHAHAHAHAHA!
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, HAMMERHEAD!
I GOT A PLACE AT LAKE TAHOE. WHADD'YA SAY WE GO THERE AND KICK BACK?
DRIVE ON, PAL.

YOU ALMOST STOPPED THEM.
YEAH. WITH MY HEAD. THEY SHOULD HAVE AIRBAGS OUTSIDE THE CAR.
WE'RE WASTING TIME.
WELL, EXCUSE ME FOR LIVING, BABE. IT WAS ME WHO JUST SAVED YOUR BUTT; OR AM I WRONG?
WE'RE LEAVING DAREDEVIL ALONE AGAINST THESE GOONS.
"I WOULDN'T WANT HIM TO GET HIS CASSOCK DIRTY."
NOBODY LEAVES HERE.
THE PLANE IS OURS. LET US LEAVE AND YOU LIVE.
THE JET IS OURS. WE'RE TAKING IT!

THINGS ARE GETTING A LITTLE OUT OF CONTROL.
UNNH!
UGGGH!
YOU ALMOST HIT DAREDEVIL.
JUST WATCH IT, OKAY?
SO? I THOUGHT YOU DETESTED HIM.
I THOUGHT THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING. I THOUGHT WE WERE ALIKE. KINDRED SPIRITS.
LADY, THE ONLY KIN YOU HAVE IS A COILED RATTLER.
MORE LIKE A VIPER, ACTUALLY.
WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS.

LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY'S LEAVING THE PARTY EARLY.
AND IF WE LET THEM, THEY'LL STRAFE THE FIELD BEFORE THEY GO.
UNLESS I STOP THEM FROM LEAVING.
MADE IT.
NOW WHAT?


"...BUT HE'S A FIRST-CLASS ANNOYANCE."
KNOCK THAT COPTER DOWN!
IF WE CANNOT ESCAPE THEN NO ONE WILL!
#&%#!
IF HE HADN'T GOTTEN UP THERE WE COULD HAVE SHOT IT DOWN.
I TOLD YOU, THE MAN IS AN ANNOYANCE.
YEAH...
MAN, HOW MANY OF THOSE CREEPS ARE THERE?
WE CAN'T STAY HERE.
THIS IS AN EXCELLENT POSITION WITH A CLEAR FIELD OF FIRE.
SURE, BUT...

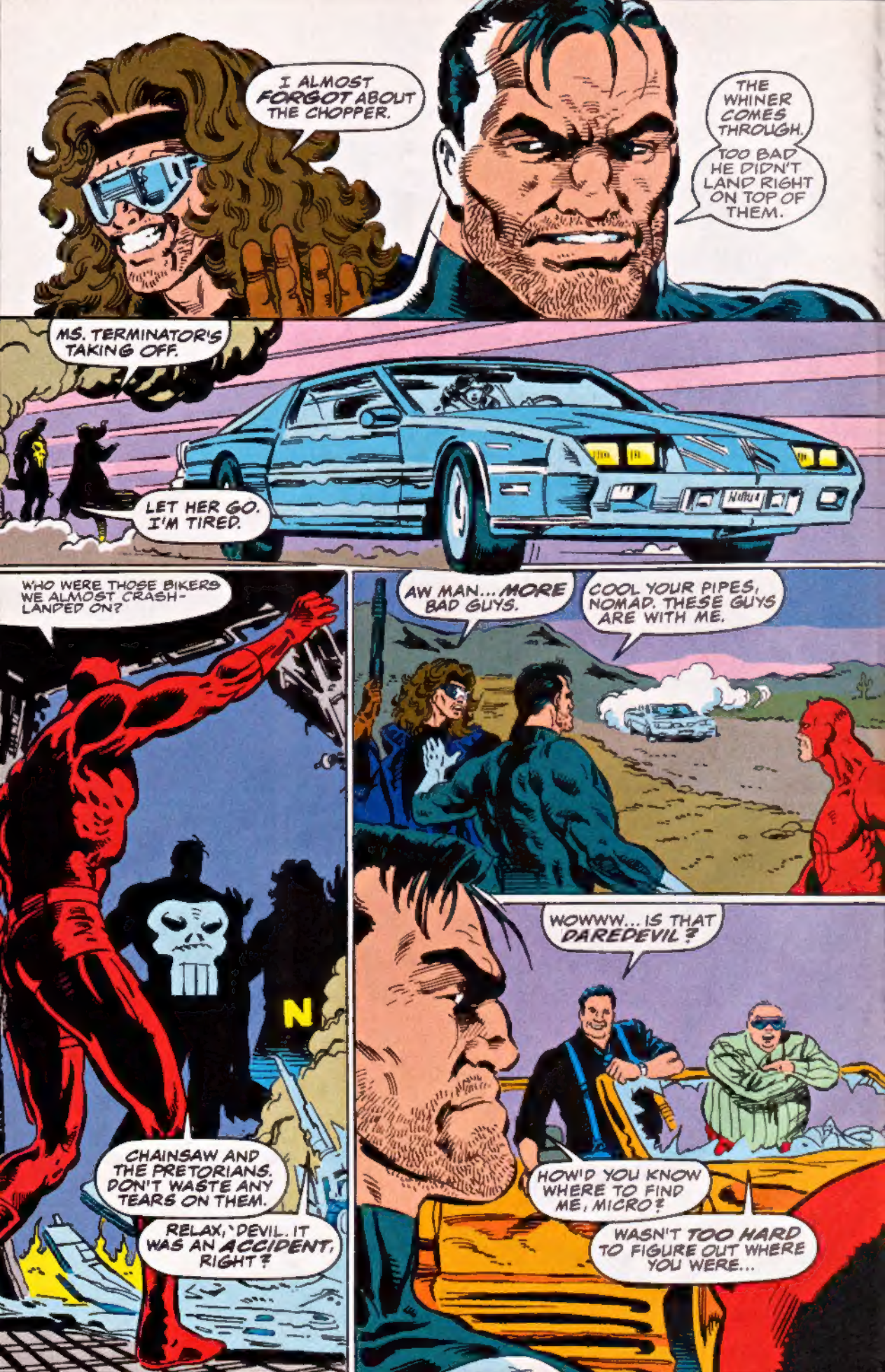

...ONE HOT ROUND INTO THAT TANK, AND IT'S DONE
SUDDENLY THERE'S NO AIR TO BREATH.
SUDDENLY THE EARTH SHAKES.
SUDDENLY THE WORLD'S ON FIRE.
NO COVER ANYWHERE, PUNISHER.
WHAT DO YOU CARE? YOU'RE BULLETPROOF.
I AM?

LAND THIS THING.
HAI!
LAND IT RIGHT NOW!
HAI! HAI!
NOMAD!
DON'T WORRY, MAN! I'LL DO THIS YOUR WAY!
STUPID KID!
HE'S NO CHILD, PUNISHER HE'S OVER FIFTY YEARS OLD.
JUST KILL 'EM ALL AND LET--
UH!
UH!
UH!
WHERE DO YOU GET THESE LITTLE GEMS OF WISDOM?
I KNOW MANY THINGS. THINGS THAT COULD BE USEFUL TO A MAN WITH YOUR MISSION.

KILL HIM! MAKE CERTAIN HE'S DEAD!
WHAT ARE YOU FIRING?
JUST A SAMPLE OF THE SORT OF ORDNANCE I COULD OBTAIN FOR YOU-- WERE WE TO WORK TOGETHER
PLOK!
HERE!
CATCH
OOF!
OW!
KEVLAR WHAT A GIFT
YOW!

YOU COULD WORK FOR ME. I'D FINANCE YOU. ARM YOU. SUPPLY YOU WITH INFORMATION.
YOU WOULD BE EXTERMINATING THE SAME LICE YOU GO AFTER NOW. EVEN BIGGER ONES.
YOU SEE? I COULD SUPPLY YOU WITH WEAPONRY YOU COULD ONLY DREAM ABOUT.
YOU'RE A LITTLE CARELESS WHEN IT COMES TO HUMAN LIFE, AREN'T YOU?
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH--LOOK WHO'S TALKING!
A PITY YOU'RE SUCH A FOOL.
HEY! ALL OF A SUDDEN THIS IS LOOKING LIKE THE LAST SCENE IN AN ITALIAN WESTERN.
TO ADVANCE YOUR CAUSE? NO THANKS
WELL, SO MUCH FOR THE SECRET EMPIRE BUT MAN, YOU GUYS PLAY CLOSE.
WHO'S THAT?
WHO'S LEFT?

RUP! RUP! RRRROOOOOW!
PUNISHER!
WENT DOWN TO THE HARDWARE STORE AND PICKED ME UP A BRAND NEW CHOPPER JUST FOR YOU!
DIE SCREAMING, PUNISHER!
WHUH?
BUH-BASH!


I ALMOST FORGOT ABOUT THE CHOPPER.
THE WHINER COMES THROUGH.
TOO BAD HE DIDN'T LAND RIGHT ON TOP OF THEM.
MS. TERMINATOR'S TAKING OFF.
LET HER GO. I'M TIRED.
WHO WERE THOSE BIKERS WE ALMOST CRASH-LANDED ON?
CHAINSAW AND THE PRETORIANS. DON'T WASTE ANY TEARS ON THEM.
RELAX, 'DEVIL. IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, RIGHT?
AW MAN... MORE BAD GUYS.
COOL YOUR PIPES, NOMAD. THESE GUYS ARE WITH ME.
WOWWW... IS THAT DAREDEVIL?
HOW'D YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME, MICRO?
WASN'T TOO HARD TO FIGURE OUT WHERE YOU WERE...

...I JUST FOLLOWED THE SMOKE TRAIL.
YOU ARE DAREDEVIL.
YES, I AM.
AND YOU'RE ANOTHER GUY, HAWKEYE, RIGHT?
MICKEY...
NO.
THE HUMAN TORCH?
NOT EVEN CLOSE.
SPIDER-MAN, MAYBE?
GIVE ME A BREAK.
GIVE ME A HINT, WHY DON'TCHA.
WHO IS THIS GUY?
MICKEY... SHUT UP.

PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL ENTRIES

DON DALEY
editor
TIM TUOHY
assistant editor

Attention Correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will withhold that info by request!

Dear PWJ,

Issue #44 is amazing! But I have to say more. Dixon once again packs a wallop — tight, taut and perfect till the end! Mayerik and Fredericks work incredibly well together. Obviously, due to the fact that the story was being expressed visually without the aid of text. Great job. Novak and Glynis keep a firm hand on the lettering and colors. All around, one of the best PWJ's in a long time.

But... I have say that the story was too fast. I mean, I barely had time to breathe from start to finish. It was just *too* quick a ride. What do you want to do, give us readers a heart attack?

Mark Gallagher
Dauphine Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70117

Dear Don,

Issue #44 was good, even great, except, and I'm being honest here, a minor problem with the plot. You expect us to believe that the Punisher figured out the entire insurance scam because of finding out that one of the thugs suspected a double cross? Come on. Give us Punisher fans a bit more credit. We know it's hard in a twenty-two page book to expound on every plot detail, but at least make sure that the things that happen are previously established. This issue looks great, even reads really well, but upon finishing I found myself scratching my head, thinking, "Well, isn't that pat."

This is no slight on Chuck dixon who I think does a great job. The dialogue, as usual, is crisp and lively, as is most of the plotting. What I'm concerned about is a fairly specific item. You see, the whole book flows – and logically I might add – right up until the point at the end where the Punisher walks into the office of the home owner and blows him away. Not that I'm not thrilled to see the &%$# blown away, it's just that I wish more could've been done to establish this plot point back at the house, at least more than merely one of the thugs suspecting a double cross.

Brad Thomas
134 Elm St.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

Hold up, John. It's more than just one of the thugs *"suspecting"* a double cross. Page fourteen, panel one, shows the Punisher being held from behind while another guy waves a drill in his face. The one with the drill is clearly heard saying: "You're not a cop, not even security. Not in *that* get up. This is some kind of double cross. You with Brandeis?" Brandeis, as already identified earlier from the first hood, is the home owner. Fairly clear cut to us.

Dear PWJ,

The cover to #44 was amazing. JR and this guy Janson are so sharp it seems their talents are being wasted if they're only doing covers. I'm new to the world of comics but know who I like and these two are amazing. Have they ever been on the inside of PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL? Or on the cover of any other books, as a team I mean?

Mitch Barks
Main Street
Grandville, Ohio 43023

No, we're sorry to say, Mitch, that John Romita Jr. and Klaus Janson have never worked together within the pages of PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL. However, the two *do* appear on the covers (and incidentally throughout the pages) of many other books. In fact, as of late the two have been combining their mighty talents to create not just any Marvel comic, but that of the PUNISHER WAR ZONE. That's *right*, to find more Punisher action by the esteemed team of John Romita Jr. and Klaus Janson all you need to do is turn to the pages of PUNISHER WAR ZONE (the first six issues). And now that you know, John, what are you waiting for... *go get a copy!*

Dear PWJ,

I am ten years old and have been reading the Punisher for a long time. I have a friend who also reads the PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL. We think the Punisher is the best crime fighter there is, but we thought it odd how he doesn't have any super powers. Will the Punisher ever have super powers?

Brian Emrich
143 Grove street
Nevada City, CA 95959

The odds are certainly against it, Brian. *Does the Punisher need them?*

Dear PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL,

My younger brother (he's eight, I'm sixteen) loves your book, but (and this is not just a sob story) he just broke his arm. So here I am. He wanted me to say how much he loves the book (There, I've said it, Rob). Now I want to say something. Prior to last year, getting him to read was impossible, then someone gave him a copy of PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL. He's been reading them religiously ever since (and all the other Punisher books, I should say, too). He's even been tempted, but hasn't actually done so (not yet...) to pick up larger books!!! Mom is really happy and so am I (I don't listen to that garbage about hating your younger brother. I'm proud of him). Thanks again, from all us Morton's, for the many pages of reading you've provided *us* (that's right, I read the Punisher,too).

Maria and Rob Morton
43 Delmonte Drive
Valencia, California 91355

Thanks for writing, Maria; hope the arm heals quick, Rob. Till next issue...

VENOM ALERT!

For you Venom fans out there—we've got a special comic book in the works called SPIDER-MAN: THE TRIAL OF VENOM, which features that pivotal event as well as action-as-you-like-it between Vennie and Spider-Man!

Now, you won't be able to find this monumental opus at your comic shop or newsstand, because Marvel is producing it to raise funds for the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. UNICEF works in many poor nations around the world, making sure that children in them have food to eat and clean water to drink.

To get a copy, you'll have to mail in a donation of at least $5.00 to the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. So you not only get a great story—one that is part of the Spidey continuity—but you also get to contribute to a worthy cause.

Look for the coupon to order SPIDER-MAN: THE TRIAL OF VENOM in next month's Marvel mags, or ask your retailer for one. You won't want to miss this truly special comics event.